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THE Earl of Briſtol HIS SPEECH IN THE Houſe of Lords,

The XX. Day of *July* 1660. upon the BILL of

INDEMPNITY.

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LONDON,
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My Lords,

BEing to ſpeak unto your Lordſhips ſomwhat more extendedly then is my uſe, and upon a Subject wherein there may be perhaps not onely difference, but even fervour of Opinions, I find my ſelf obliged by ſomwhat that happened to me here the other day, to beg a favour of your Lordſhips, that if

I should chance to erre in formes and orders of the House, or that there should slip from me unawares any expression that may be dissonant to the Ears of those who understand better than I the force and propriety of words, you will will not be severe unto me, but be pleased to consider, that I have been sixteen years out of my Country, and in a profession far differing from what I am now a doing: in confidence of this indulgence I shall proceed.

My Lords you have here before you in this Bill of Indemnity the most important business that perhaps the House of Peers hath at any time had in deliberation; it is that upon which the Honour or eternal Reproch of the Nation abroad, and its happiness or Confusion at home, seemes (next under Gods inscrutable Providence) most principally to depend. For on the one side how abhorr'd a Nation must we be to all others, if the *Infamy of Our Sovereigns murther* should not be throughly washed away by Justice in the blood of the guilty? And on the other, what happineſſe or quiet can we hope for at home, nay, what new combustions ought we not to apprehend, if the Criminal and the Misled (between whom the Eye of the Law can make little distinction) making up so numerous a part of the Nation, their fears, which might urge them to new Crimes, should not be secured by the firmest assurances of *Impunity?* Punishing and Securing are certainly the two principal Ends of this Bill, and wherein as certainly every one of Your Lordships doth concur; but whether the meane of attaining those ends have been sufficiently lighted upon by the House of Commons in this Bill, That *I* suppose is the present Question; and wherein I think my self in duty obliged to expresse unto Your Lordships with freedom and sincerity my Judgment, in all humble submission unto Yours.

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As for that part of the Bill which relates to our Soveraigns murder, I find it so short and so much out of the way, of what we owe, both to the severity and solemnity of that revenge, that I cannot but think it some sort (pardon the expression) a prophanation of the due Rites of that sacred expiation, to handle it in the same Bill promiscuously with other more vulgar things.

My motion therefore shall be, That there be forthwith a Committee appointed, to consider of all things fit to be done for the washing away of that Stain from the Nation, and from the Age wherein we live; and to draw up an Act purposely and solely for that end. In confidence that this motion will either be embraced by your Lordships, or that, if it be opposed, I shall have the liberty to fortifie it by my reasons, I shall set that business apart, and apply my discourse to what concerns this Bill in all other relations: In which I shall not make nice to tell Your Lordships, that I think it defective in many things reasonable, and redundant in some things unreasonable; and yet, notwithstanding, that only my humble Motion, but my most earnest pressure, as far as with humility I may, shall be, That We may proceed immediately to the passing of this Bill, with little or no alteration.

This, my Lords, may appear a surprising motion from a Person thought to be, as indeed I am, as much inflamed as any man living, with Indignation at the detestable proceedings of the late usurped Power, so pernicious to the Publick, and so injurious to my own particular; in whom, the motion may seem yet more surprising, when I shall have

have told You with truth, that I am irreparably ruined in my fortune for my Loyalty, (if this Bill of Indempnity to others for their Disloyalty should passe as it is here offered unto Your Lordships) But the ground I go upon is, this received Maxime as to all publick Sanctions. *Better a Mischief, than an Inconvenience: yea, Better innumerable Mischiefs to particular Persons and Families, than one heavy Inconvenience to the Publick.*

My Lords, I profess unto you I find my self set on fire, when I think that the blood of so many vertuous and meritorious Peers, and Persons and others of all ranks, so cruelly and impiously shed, should cry so loud for vengeance, and not find it from us.

That many of the wickedest and meanest of the people should remain as it were rewarded for their Treasons, rich and triumphant in the spoils of the most eminent in vertue and loyalty of all the Nobility and Gentrey of the Kingdome.

What generous Spirit can make reflection on these things, and not finde his heart burn into rage within him?

Here it is, my Lords, that we sufferers have need of all our Philosophie.

But when I consider that these are mischiefs onely to the sufferers, and that to insist upon a remedy might perhaps expose the publick to an irreparable inconvenience, I thank God I find in an instant all my resentments calmed and submitted to my primary duty.

My Lords, We have here in our view a Kingdom tossed and rowling still with the effects of past Tempests; and though, God be thanked, the Storm be miraculously ceased, we cannot say that the danger is, until we get into still

water:

water: That Still, that Smooth Water is onely to be found in the Generalities ſecurity from their guilty fears, and in the Two Houſes Union between Themſelves, and with their Soveraign.

Whether the latter may not be endangered if we ſhould enter into Controverſie upon the particulars of this Bill, I leave unto your Lordſhips to judge. But certainly, as to the former, there can be no hopes of raiſing Moneyes, or disbanding Armies, or of ſettling that Happineſs and Tranquility which We all ſigh for, of being governed under Our Gracious Soveraign by the Ancient and known Lawes of the Land, whileſt Univerſal Fears ſhall ſubſiſt by the delay in paſſing this Bill.

MY LORDS,

I ſhall ſumme up unto Your Lordſhips my whole drift in a few words.

I think that in this Bill there are many things wanting which ſolid and important reaſons would require to be added, and many things inſerted into it, which Juſtice to his Majeſties intereſts and to particular perſons would require to be omitted or rectified: But I conceive at the ſame time that the miſchiefs of the delay in paſſing it do far out-weigh all the advantages of improving it.

My Lords,

I ſhall conclude my Diſcourſe and your Lordſhips trouble with the application to this purpoſe of a memorable ſaying of that Illuſtrious Miniſter, the Cardinal *Mazarine*, at a Council in the Wars of *France*, whereunto I had the honour to be called. It was, That in the great Affairs of the World he

he had not known any thing do more hurt then these two words *Faisons Mieux* let us do better. For, said he, whilst good Wits endeavour by debates to bring good Counsels to a greater perfection, they do for the most part lose the opportunity of timeing things rightly, which in great actions is of far more importance then the preference according to refined reason betwixt Good and Better.

Upon this ground my conclusion is, that that part which concerns the Kings death being put in the way proposed, we should proceed to the speedy passing of this Bill, without losing any time in emendations; but if we be destined to so fatal a loss by raveling into particulars, I shall in that case desire leave to offer unto your Lordships therein my reflections also.

FINIS.